

5                   A WHITE OIL AS PLASTICIZER IN A POLYSTYRENE  
                  COMPOSITION AND PROCESS TO PREPARE SAID OIL

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10       **[0001]** The invention is directed to a polystyrene  
          composition comprising a medicinal or technical white  
          oil as plasticizer.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15       **[0002]** Such a composition is described in US Patent  
          2619478 as published in 1952. This publication  
          describes a molding composition comprising of a  
          thermoplastic polystyrene resin and a minor amount of  
          a mineral oil for increasing the rate of flow of the  
          resin during molding and facilitating removal of the  
20       molded products from molds in which they are formed.  
          The mineral oils exemplified in this publication are  
          substantially free of unsaturated compounds, or  
          aromatic radicals, non-volatile at room conditions  
          and at usual molding conditions. They boil at a  
25       temperature of 200 °C or higher at 760 mmHg.  
          The illustrated mineral oils had a kinematic  
          viscosity at 40 °C of about 10-44 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec.

**[0003]** At least since 1952 mineral oils have been  
          used in polystyrene compositions as plasticizers.  
30       Examples of a more recent publication which mentions  
          mineral white oils as plasticizers in polystyrene  
          compositions is for example EP-A-634444 as published  
          in 1995.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

35       **[0004]** A polystyrene composition or styrene  
          copolymers composition comprising a medicinal or  
          technical white oil as plasticizer, wherein the oil

comprises a Fischer-Tropsch derived oil and a process for making said oil.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

5       **[0005]** If the polystyrene composition is to be used  
in food applications, for example, coffee cups or  
food packaging, more stringent property requirements  
for the white oil plasticizer exist. According to EU  
Directive 90/128/EEC based on the recommendation of  
the Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) of the  
10       European Commission and on the results of oral  
feeding studies carried out at the request of SCF by  
CONCAWE specifications for such oil have been set.  
The medicinal white oil must contain not more than 5%  
(w/w) mineral hydrocarbons with carbon numbers less  
15       than 25, kinematic viscosity at 100 °C not less than  
8.5 mm<sup>2</sup>/s and an average molecular weight not less  
than 480 g/mol. The properties of a medicinal white  
oil are described by the following standards:  
- European Pharmacopeia 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition;  
20       - US Pharmacopeia 23<sup>rd</sup> edition;  
- US FDA specification CFR §172.927 for "direct" food  
use;  
- US FDA specification CFR §178.3620(a) for  
"indirect" food contact.  
25       Medicinal white oils are for example described in the  
general textbook "Lubricant Base Oil and Wax  
Processing", Avilino Sequeira, Jr, Marcel Dekker  
Inc., New York, 1994, Chapter 6, pages 141-145. In  
table 6.24 on page 144 of this book it is found that  
30       Food Grade White Oils (medicinal white oils) having a  
kinematic viscosity at 100 °C of 9.45 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec and a  
pour point of -3 °C are prepared from a mineral oil  
feedstock containing high amounts of sulfur (>10.000

ppm S). It is clear that severe hydroprocessing is required to prepare such a high viscosity grade medicinal white oil, making such a product expensive.

**[0006]** Applicants have found, as an alternative,

5 that a Fischer-Tropsch derived oil can be used as a plasticizer in a polystyrene composition. The use of Fischer-Tropsch derived oils is advantageous because they are more easily obtained as compared to the method based on mineral oils. A further advantage is  
10 that the content of sulfur and nitrogen are nearly zero due to the nature of the Fischer-Tropsch process. A next advantage is that the pour point of the Fischer-Tropsch derived oils is typically lower than that of the mineral derived white oils having  
15 comparable viscosity. This is advantageous because handling of the plasticizer oil at low temperature conditions will become less cumbersome for the polystyrene manufacturer.

**[0007]** The polystyrene composition is suitably a so-called clear polystyrene molding material. This  
20 composition is well known and is for example described in more detail in Ullmann's Encyclopedia of Industrial Chemistry, 5<sup>th</sup> completely revised ed. VCH New York, Vol. A21, pages 616-633, herein  
25 incorporated by reference.

**[0008]** The content of plasticizer in the polystyrene composition may range from 0.1 wt% to 10 wt% and more suitably from 2 wt% to 5 wt%.

**[0009]** The medicinal white oil as derived from a  
30 Fischer-Tropsch process may have a kinematic viscosity at 100 °C ( $\nu_K@100$ ) between 2 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec and 30 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec. More preferably the  $\nu_K@100$  is above 7 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec and most preferably above 8.5 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec if the

composition according to the invention is used for a food application. The upper limit for the  $\nu_K@100$  is preferably below  $15 \text{ mm}^2/\text{s}$  because at higher viscosities the oil becomes less compatible with the polystyrene or styrene copolymer composition. For food applications, the oil preferably has the properties as described above and 5%w boiling point greater than  $391^\circ\text{C}$ . The Fischer-Tropsch derived oil preferably has a Saybolt color of greater than +25 and preferably equal to +30. The content of polar compounds is preferably less than 1 wt% and the content of non-cyclic isoparaffins is preferably between 75 wt% and 98 wt%. The ultra violet (UV) absorption spectra values as measured according to ASTM D 2269, are preferably less than 0.70 in the 280-289 nm spectral band, less than 0.60 in the 290-299 nm spectral band, less than 0.40 in the 300-329 nm spectral band and less than 0.09 in the 330-380 nm spectral band as according to FDA 178.3620 (c). The pour point of the oil is preferably below  $-10^\circ\text{C}$  and more preferably below  $-15^\circ\text{C}$ . The CN number as measured according to IEC 590 is preferably between 15 and 30.

**[0010]** The above Fischer-Tropsch derived oil is preferably obtained by the following process. The preferred process comprises (1) a Fischer-Tropsch synthesis step, (2) hydrocracking/hydroisomerization step on (part of) the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product followed by (3) a pour point reducing step of (a fraction of) the product of the hydroprocessing step. Either solvent or catalytic dewaxing may achieve reduction of pour point in step (3). The desired medicinal or technical white oil having the desired viscosity can be isolated from said dewaxed

product by means of distillation. Optionally the oil is hydrofinished or subjected to an adsorption treatment in order to improve its color. Examples of these process steps are illustrated for the below preferred embodiment.

**[0011]** The Fischer-Tropsch synthesis step may be performed according to the so-called commercial Sasol process, the commercial Shell Middle Distillate Process or by the non-commercial Exxon process. These and other processes are for example described in more detail in EP-A-776959, EP-A-668342, US-4943672, US-5059299, WO-A-9934917 and WO-A-9920720, all of which are herein incorporated by reference. Most of these publications also describe the above-mentioned hydroisomerization/ hydrocracking step (2).

**[0012]** A preferred process in which high yields of medicinal or technical white oils having a  $\text{vK@100}$  of greater than  $7 \text{ mm}^2/\text{sec}$  can be obtained is by

- (a) hydrocracking/hydroisomerising a Fischer-Tropsch derived feed, wherein weight ratio of compounds having at least 60 or more carbon atoms and compounds having at least 30 carbon atoms in the Fischer-Tropsch derived feed is at least 0.2 and wherein at least 30 wt% of compounds in the Fischer-Tropsch derived feed have at least 30 carbon atoms,
- (b) separating the product of step (a) into one or more lower boiling distillate fraction(s) and a higher boiling white oil precursor fraction,
- (c) performing a pour point reducing step to white oil precursor fraction obtained in step (b), and
- (d) isolating the white oil by distilling the product of step (c).

**[0013]** The relatively heavy Fischer-Tropsch derived feed as used in step (a) has at least 30 wt%,

preferably at least 50 wt%, and more preferably at least 55 wt% of compounds having at least 30 carbon atoms. Furthermore, the weight ratio of compounds having at least 60 or more carbon atoms and compounds having at least 30 carbon atoms of the Fischer-Tropsch derived feed is at least 0.2, preferably at least 0.4 and more preferably at least 0.55. The Fischer-Tropsch derived feed is preferably derived from a Fischer-Tropsch product which comprises a C<sub>20</sub>+ fraction having an ASF-alpha value (Anderson-Schulz-Flory chain growth factor) of at least 0.925, preferably at least 0.935, more preferably at least 0.945, even more preferably at least 0.955.

**[0014]** The initial boiling point of the Fischer-Tropsch derived feed may range up to 400 °C, but is preferably below 200 °C. Preferably at least any compounds having 4 or less carbon atoms and any compounds having a boiling point in that range are separated from a Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product before the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product is used as a Fischer-Tropsch derived feed in step (a). The Fischer-Tropsch derived feed as described in detail above will for the greater part comprise of a Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product which has not been subjected to a hydroconversion step as defined according to the present invention. In addition to this Fischer-Tropsch product, other fractions may be part of the Fischer-Tropsch derived feed. Possible other fractions may suitably be any high boiling fraction obtained in step (b).

**[0015]** Such a Fischer-Tropsch derived feed is suitably obtained by a Fischer-Tropsch process which yields a relatively heavy Fischer-Tropsch product. Not all Fischer-Tropsch processes yield such a heavy

product. An example of a suitable Fischer-Tropsch process is described in WO-A-9934917 and in AU-A-698392, both of which are herein incorporated by reference. These processes may yield a Fischer-Tropsch product as described above.

**[0016]** The Fischer-Tropsch derived feed and the resulting waxy raffinate product will contain no or very little sulfur and nitrogen containing compounds. This is typical for a product derived from a Fischer-Tropsch reaction, which uses synthesis gas containing almost no impurities. Sulfur and nitrogen levels will generally be below the detection limits, which are currently 5 ppm for sulfur and 1 ppm for nitrogen.

**[0017]** The hydrocracking/hydroisomerization reaction of step (a) is preferably performed in the presence of hydrogen and a catalyst, which catalyst can be chosen from those known to one skilled in the art as being suitable for this reaction. Catalysts for use in step (a) typically comprise an acidic functionality and a hydrogenation/dehydrogenation functionality. Preferred acidic functionalities are refractory metal oxide carriers. Suitable carrier materials include silica, alumina, silica-alumina, zirconia, titania and mixtures thereof. Preferred carrier materials for inclusion in the catalyst for use in the process of this invention are silica, alumina and silica-alumina. A particularly preferred catalyst comprises platinum supported on a silica-alumina carrier. If desired, the acidity of the catalyst carrier may be enhanced by applying a halogen moiety, in particular fluorine, or a phosphorous moiety to the carrier. Examples of suitable hydrocracking/hydroisomerization processes and suitable catalysts are described in WO-A-0014179,

EP-A-532118, both of which are herein incorporated by reference, and the earlier referred to EP-A-776959.

**[0018]** Preferred hydrogenation/dehydrogenation

functionalities are Group VIII metals, such as

5 nickel, cobalt, iron, palladium and platinum.

Preferred are the noble metal Group VIII members,

palladium and, more preferred, platinum. The catalyst

may comprise the more preferred noble metal

hydrogenation/ dehydrogenation active component in an

10 amount of from 0.005 to 5 parts by weight, preferably

from 0.02 to 2 parts by weight, per 100 parts by

weight of carrier material. A particularly preferred

catalyst for use in the hydroconversion stage

comprises platinum in an amount in the range of from

15 0.05 to 2 parts by weight, more preferably from 0.1

to 1 parts by weight, per 100 parts by weight of

carrier material. The catalyst may also comprise a

binder to enhance the strength of the catalyst. The

binder can be non-acidic. Examples are clays and

20 other binders known to one skilled in the art.

**[0019]** In step (a) the feed is contacted with

hydrogen in the presence of the catalyst at elevated

temperature and pressure. The temperatures typically

will be in the range of from 175 °C to 380 °C,

25 preferably higher than 250 °C and more preferably

from 300 °C to 370 °C. The pressure will typically be

in the range of from 10 bar to 250 bar and preferably

between 20 bar and 80 bar. Hydrogen may be supplied

at a gas hourly space velocity of from 100 Nl/l/hr to

30 10000 Nl/l/hr, preferably from 500 Nl/l/hr to

5000 Nl/l/hr. The hydrocarbon feed may be provided at

a weight hourly space velocity of from 0.1 kg/l/hr to

5 kg/l/hr, preferably higher than 0.5 kg/l/hr and

more preferably lower than 2 kg/l/hr. The ratio of



hydrogen to hydrocarbon feed may range from 100 Nl/kg to 5000 Nl/kg and is preferably from 250 Nl/kg to 2500 Nl/kg.

5       **[0020]** The conversion in step (a) as defined as the weight percentage of the feed boiling above 370 °C which reacts per pass to a fraction boiling below 370 °C, is at least 20 wt%, preferably at least 25 wt%, but preferably not more than 80 wt%, more preferably not more than 65 wt%. The feed as used  
10       above in the definition is the total hydrocarbon feed fed to step (a), thus also including any optional recycle of the higher boiling fraction as obtained in step (b).

15       **[0021]** In step (b) the product of step (a) is preferably separated into one or more distillate fractions, a white oil precursor fraction having preferably a T10wt% boiling point of between 300 °C and 450 °C. A heavy fraction may be separated from the product of step (a) to adjust the resultant  
20       viscosity of the medicinal or technical white oil. If no heavy fraction is removed the kinematic viscosity at 100 °C of the white oil may be well above 15 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec. By adjusting the amount and cut point at which the said heavy fraction is separated from the  
25       effluent of step (a) medicinal white oils or technical white oils can be obtained having a kinematic viscosity at 100 °C ranging from 7 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec and preferably from 8.5 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec to 15 mm<sup>2</sup>/sec.

30       **[0022]** If a heavy fraction is separated then the T90wt% boiling point of the white oil precursor fraction will preferably be between 350 °C and 550 °C. The separation is preferably performed by means of a first distillation at about atmospheric

conditions, preferably at a pressure of between 1.2-2 bara, wherein the gas oil product and lower boiling fractions, such as naphtha and kerosene fractions, are separated from the higher boiling fraction of the product of step (a). If a high boiling fraction is removed from the product of step (a) as described above, then this higher boiling fraction, of which suitably at least 95 wt% boils above 370 °C, is further separated in a vacuum distillation step wherein a vacuum gas oil fraction, the white oil precursor fraction and the optional higher boiling fraction are obtained. The vacuum distillation is suitably performed at a pressure of between 0.001 bara and 0.1 bara.

**[0023]** In step (c) the white oil precursor fraction obtained in step (b) is subjected to a pour point reducing treatment. With a pour point reducing treatment is understood every process wherein the pour point of the base oil is reduced by more than 10 °C, preferably more than 20 °C, more preferably more than 25 °C. The pour point reducing treatment is preferably performed by means of a so-called catalytic dewaxing process.

**[0024]** The catalytic dewaxing process can be performed by any process wherein in the presence of a catalyst and hydrogen the pour point of the white oil precursor fraction is reduced as specified above. Suitable dewaxing catalysts are heterogeneous catalysts comprising a molecular sieve and optionally in combination with a metal having a hydrogenation function, such as the Group VIII metals. Molecular sieves, and more suitably intermediate pore size zeolites, have shown a good catalytic ability to reduce the pour point of the white oil precursor

fraction under catalytic dewaxing conditions.

Preferably the intermediate pore size zeolites have a pore diameter of between 0.35 nm and 0.8 nm. Suitable intermediate pore size zeolites are mordenite, ZSM-5, ZSM-12, ZSM-22, ZSM-23, SSZ-32, ZSM-35 and ZSM-48.

Another preferred group of molecular sieves are the silica-aluminaphosphate (SAPO) materials of which SAPO-11 is most preferred as for example described in US-4859311. ZSM-5 may optionally be used in its HZSM-5 form in the absence of any Group VIII metal.

The other molecular sieves are preferably used in combination with an added Group VIII metal. Suitable Group VIII metals are nickel, cobalt, platinum and palladium. Examples of possible combinations are

Ni/ZSM-5, Pt/ZSM-23, Pd/ZSM-23, Pt/ZSM-48 and Pt/SAPO-11. Further details and examples of suitable molecular sieves and dewaxing conditions are for example described in WO-A-9718278, US-5053373, US-5252527 and US-4574043, all of which are herein incorporated by reference.

**[0025]** The dewaxing catalyst suitably also comprises a binder. The binder can be a synthetic or naturally occurring (inorganic) substance, for example clay, silica and/or metal oxides. Natural occurring clays are for example of the montmorillonite and kaolin families. The binder is preferably a porous binder material, for example, a refractory oxide of which examples are: alumina, silica-alumina, silica-magnesia, silica-zirconia, silica-thoria, silica-beryllia, silica-titania as well as ternary compositions, for example silica-alumina-thoria, silica-alumina-zirconia, silica-alumina-magnesia and silica-magnesia-zirconia. More preferably a low acidity refractory oxide binder material which is

essentially free of alumina is used. Examples of these binder materials are silica, zirconia, titanium dioxide, germanium dioxide, boria and mixtures of two or more of these of which examples are listed above.

5 The most preferred binder is silica.

[0026] A preferred class of dewaxing catalysts comprise intermediate zeolite crystallites as described above and a low acidity refractory oxide binder material which is essentially free of alumina as described above, wherein the surface of the aluminosilicate zeolite crystallites has been modified by subjecting the aluminosilicate zeolite crystallites to a surface dealumination treatment. A preferred dealumination treatment is by contacting an extrudate of the binder and the zeolite with an aqueous solution of a fluorosilicate salt as described in for example US-5157191 or WO-A-0029511; which are herein incorporated by reference. Examples of suitable dewaxing catalysts as described above are silica bound and dealuminated Pt/ZSM-5, silica bound and dealuminated Pt/ZSM-23, silica bound and dealuminated Pt/ZSM-12, silica bound and dealuminated Pt/ZSM-22, as for example described in WO-A-0029511 and EP-B-832171.

25 [0027] Catalytic dewaxing conditions are known in the art and typically involve operating temperatures in the range of from 200 °C to 500 °C, suitably from 250 °C to 400 °C, hydrogen pressures in the range of from 10 bar to 200 bar, preferably from 40 bar to 70  
30 bar, weight hourly space velocities (WHSV) in the range of from 0.1 to 10 kg of oil per litre of catalyst per hour (kg/l/hr), suitably from 0.2 to 5 kg/l/hr, more suitably from 0.5 to 3 kg/l/hr and hydrogen to oil ratios in the range of from 100 to

2,000 litres of hydrogen per litre of oil. By varying the temperature between 315 °C and 375 °C at between 40-70 bars, in the catalytic dewaxing step it is possible to prepare base oils having different pour point specifications varying from suitably -10 °C to -60 °C.

**[0028]** In step (d) the dewaxed effluent of step (c), optionally after flashing off some low boiling compounds, is separated into one or more low viscosity base oil products and the white oil.

**[0029]** In order to improve the color properties of this white oil fraction as obtained above a final finishing treatment may be performed. Examples of suitable finishing treatments are so-called sulfuric acid treating processes, hydrofinishing processes and adsorption processes. Sulfuric acid treating is for example described in the general textbook "Lubricant Base Oil and Wax Processing", Avilino Sequeira, Jr., Marcel Dekker Inc., New York, 1994, Chapter 6, pages 226-227.

**[0030]** Hydrofinishing is suitably carried out at a temperature between 180 °C and 380 °C, a total pressure of between 10 bar to 250 bar and preferably above 100 bar and more preferably between 120 bar and 250 bar. The WHSV (Weight hourly space velocity) ranges from 0.3 to 2 kg of oil per litre of catalyst per hour (kg/l.h).

**[0031]** The hydrogenation catalyst is suitably a supported catalyst comprising a dispersed Group VIII metal. Possible Group VIII metals are cobalt, nickel, palladium and platinum. Cobalt and nickel containing catalysts may also comprise a Group VIB metal, suitably molybdenum and tungsten. Suitable carrier or support materials are low acidity amorphous

refractory oxides. Examples of suitable amorphous refractory oxides include inorganic oxides, such as alumina, silica, titania, zirconia, boria, silica-alumina, fluorided alumina, fluorided silica-alumina and mixtures of two or more of these.

**[0032]** Examples of suitable hydrogenation catalysts are nickel-molybdenum containing catalyst such as KF-847 and KF-8010 (AKZO Nobel) M-8-24 and M-8-25 (BASF), and C-424, DN-190, HDS-3 and HDS-4

(Criterion); nickel-tungsten containing catalysts such as NI-4342 and NI-4352 (Engelhard) and C-454 (Criterion); cobalt-molybdenum containing catalysts such as KF-330 (AKZO-Nobel), HDS-22 (Criterion) and HPC-601 (Engelhard). Preferably platinum containing and more preferably platinum and palladium containing catalysts are used. Preferred supports for these

palladium and/or platinum containing catalysts are amorphous silica-alumina. Examples of suitable silica-alumina carriers are disclosed in WO-A-9410263

which is herein incorporated by reference. A preferred catalyst comprises an alloy of palladium and platinum preferably supported on an amorphous silica-alumina carrier of which the commercially available catalyst C-624 of Criterion Catalyst Company (Houston, Texas) is an example.

**[0033]** The white oil as obtained by the process as described above, including the optional hydrogenation step, may also be contacted with an adsorbent to further increase the color properties. Examples of suitable heterogeneous adsorbents are active carbon, zeolites, for example natural faujasite, or synthetic materials such as ferrierite, ZSM-5, faujasite, mordenite, metal oxides such as silica powder, silica gel, aluminum oxyde and various clays, for example

Attapulugus clay (hydrous magnesium-aluminium silicate), Porocel clay (hydrated aluminium oxide). A preferred adsorbent is activated carbon.

**[0034]** In general, activated carbon is a microcrystalline, nongraphitic form of carbon, which has been processed to develop internal porosity due to which it has a large surface area. Activated carbons which have been found particularly suitable, are those having a surface area ( $N_2$ , BET method) in the range from 500  $m^2/g$  to 1500  $m^2/g$ , preferably from 900  $m^2/g$  to 1400  $m^2/g$ , and a Hg pore volume in the range from 0.1 ml/g to 1.0 ml/g, preferably from 0.2 ml/g to 0.8 ml/g. With the expression "Hg pore volume" is meant the pore volume as determined by mercury porosimetry. Very good results have been obtained with activated carbons which additionally have a micropore size distribution of 0.2 nm to 2 nm with an average of 0.5 nm to 1 nm, a pore size distribution (Hg porosimetry) in the range from 1 nm to 10,000 nm, preferably from 1 nm to 5,000 nm, and a total pore volume as determined by nitrogen porosimetry in the range from 0.4 ml/g to 1.5 ml/g, preferably from 0.5 ml/g to 1.3 ml/g. Other preferred physical characteristics include an apparent bulk density of from 0.25 g/ml to 0.55 g/ml, a particle size of from 0.4 nm to 3.5 nm, preferably 0.5 nm to 1.5 nm, and a bulk crushing strength of at least 0.8 MPa, preferably at least 1.0 MPa. Examples of suitable commercially available activated carbons include Chemviron type, Chemviron F-400 (FILTRASORB® 400), DARCO® GCL 8\*30 and DARCO® GCL 12\*40 (FILTRASORB and DARCO are trade marks).

**[0035]** The activated carbon used in the process according to the present invention is preferably dry

activated carbon. This means that the water content of the activated carbon should be less than 2% by weight, preferably less than 1% by weight and more preferably less than 0.5% by weight, based on total weight of activated carbon. This usually means that the activated carbon has to be dried first before application in the process of the present invention. Drying can be either be performed ex situ or in situ via conventional drying procedures known in the art. Examples of suitable drying procedures are those wherein activated carbon is dried at a temperature in the range of from 100°C to 500°C for 1 to 48 hours in a nitrogen atmosphere. When applying a fixed bed of activated carbon, in situ drying the activated carbon, i.e. drying after the activated carbon has been packed into a bed, is preferred.

**[0036]** The conditions (temperature, pressure, space velocity) under which the bottom product is contacted with the activated carbon may vary within broad ranges in order to still attain the desired white oil quality. Temperatures in the range of from 20 °C to 300 °C, preferably 30 °C to 200 °C, more preferably 40 °C to 150 °C, have been found to be suitable in this respect. The operating pressure of the process according to the present invention is not particularly critical and may be in the range of from 1 bar to 200 bar, preferably 1 bar to 100 bar, most preferably 1 bar to 20 bar. A suitable weight hourly space velocity has been found to be in the range of from 0.2 kg/l/hr to 25 kg/l/hr, preferably from 0.5 kg/l/hr to 10 kg/l/hr and more preferably from 1 kg/l/hr to 5 kg/l/hr.

**[0037]** The invention will be illustrated by the following non-limiting examples.



#### EXAMPLE 1

**[0038]** A bottom distillate fraction having the properties as listed in Table 1 (Feed 1) and as obtained by performing the steps (a)-(d) as described above on a Fischer-Tropsch derived feed was used to prepare a medicinal white oil. The Fischer-Tropsch derived feed used in step (a) was the C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>750</sub> °C<sup>+</sup> fraction of the Fischer-Tropsch product, as obtained in Example VII using the catalyst of Example III of WO-A-9934917. The feed contained about 60 wt% C<sub>30</sub><sup>+</sup> product. The ratio C<sub>60</sub><sup>+</sup>/C<sub>30</sub><sup>+</sup> was about 0.55.

Table 1

	Feed 1
Kinematic viscosity at 100 °C	11.11
Density (d <sub>20/4</sub> )	831.2
5%w boiling Pt ( °C)	479
Pour point ( °C)	-45
ASTM color (ASTM D 1500)	L3.0

**[0039]** The bottom distillate fraction was continuously passed over a bed of dry coarse particles of "Chemviron" charcoal type F-400 in upflow mode at 85 °C for about 100 hours, at a rate of 1 g/g.h (about 0.4 l/l.h.).

**[0040]** The UV adsorption values and Saybolt color are listed in Table 2. The results in Table 2 show that a medicinal white oil can be obtained from a Fischer-Tropsch derived bottom distillate fraction.

TABLE 2

Property-fraction:	UV range 280-289 nm	290-299 nm	300-329 nm	330-380 nm	Saybolt color
Medicinal white oil specification ** (maximum values)	0.70	0.60	0.40	0.09	+30
Feed	5.0	4.6	5.0	5.4	Too dark to use Saybolt
Oil as obtained in Example 1	0.12	0.10	0.06	0.02	+25

- according to FDA 178.3620 as measured by ASTM 2269
- \*\* according to FDA 178.3620 as measured by ASTM 2269